1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

One often hears the expression, "he is alive, and he reigns," in Greece today, for it has become a household adage. When a person is asked how someone is getting along, he may reply, "he is alive, and he reigns."

On the little islands of Greece, on many wild promontories of the mainland, stand the small white churches dedicated to St. Nicholas, the patron saint of the seafaring man. He replaced Poseidon, king of the sea, an important personage in the pagan pantheon, and most of these churches are built as the result of some vow made by the sailors faced with shipwreck who turned for help to the little icon of the saint in the stern or on the mast of the ship. These sailors curse the sea, speaking of it as "that old scoundrel," but they are tied to it with many bonds other than the economic. They tell the story of their patron saint, who found for himself the hold the sea has upon the Greek people. Nicholas suffered so many misfortunes from the sea that he decided to put it behind him forever. He picked up an oar and started walking. Every now and then he would stop someone and ask, "Do you know, stranger, what this is that I am carrying?" He moved higher and higher up into the mountains until he finally found a village where no one could identify what he was carrying and there at last he felt he could settle down, safe from the all-encircling sea.

Thus, it is not at all out of character for the seafarers, like their patron saint, to become thoroughly disgusted with the sea. They will imprecate her and, referring to her in the feminine gender, will imply that there is treachery afoot. They are also aware of her charm and, unlike the monk-like St. Nicholas, find they cannot live apart from her.

The Greek, whether seafarer or peasant, has come to grips with his stern physical environment, and this tough set of mind is just as important to his survival as the resources which he must utilize in his daily life. The tradition of the mountains led to the preservation of an independent villager, proud in his poverty, passionately devoted to his local area, and a worthy perpetuator of the folk legacy of ancient Greece. The tradition of the sea led the seafarer outwards and developed a type of Greek quite different from the mountaineer. The seafarer's commerce supplemented the self-subsistence of the peasant, but both joined together to create the political unit that is Greece today.

1:Sanders Z-5 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

A Village Baptism

One ceremony which has deep meaning for the family members is the baptism of a recently arrived infant. First of all comes the selection of godparents, although this is usually determined by the custom of having those who were sponsors at the wedding also be godparents of the children which issue from that marriage. But if many children have come subsequently it is only fitting that the honor be given to someone else. The father is free to invite some notable, say a political figure from the area, to serve as godfather, an opportunity which few politicians pass up. On the other hand, if the couple is dissatisfied with the godparent who would normally be invited, it may follow traditional procedures to select another. An inquiry into these takes one deeply into folklore and belief in magic. When childlessness, stillbirth, or infant mortality is blamed upon the godparent, villagers assume that a new godparent might lead to better success. According to Chrysoula, the wise woman of Spetsai, her sister bore a child who died within twenty-four hours after birth, and later on she had a pseudo-pregnancy. In her desperation she prayed to the Virgin: "Please give me a child of either sex. If it is a girl I'll give her your name; if it is a boy I'll dedicate it to you but will have to give it the name of its paternal grandparent." This was on the morning of March 25 (Evangelismos Day); that afternoon she had intercourse with her husband and on Christmas Day a little girl was born. As soon as she was able, the mother picked up the baby, put the baby on the porch of the church dedicated to the Virgin, and waited to see who would discover the baby and, by so doing, be designated godparent. People standing around consider it lucky to be a godparent on such an occasion, and several may be inclined to volunteer. An especially eager person may throw a handkerchief ahead of a rival and thus stake out a claim. The mother watches from a distance. When the child has been taken into the church for the ceremony, she goes home to prepare sweets and other food for the baptismal feast.

The same procedure for gaining a new godparent as a replacement for the one who sponsored the wedding of the couple is followed in most parts of Greece but occurs only infrequently, since people reluctantly change their godparent ties. Once the godparents have been selected, the guests have to be invited — relatives and very close friends or, as was fortunate in my case, an interested foreigner who happens to be in the vicinity. The women of the household allow themselves a few days in advance to plan and prepare for the festive occasion. The church ceremony is a lively affair. If the child is baptized within forty days of birth, as it usually is, the mother does not attend, for she is still unclean. The principals in the ceremony are the priest, the infant, and the godparent, with the latter's responsibility supposedly extending to the spiritual oversight of the godchild, today a matter of

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

whom they will marry. This is done by associating the verse being sung with the girl whose forfeit is drawn from the pitcher or jar at that particular time.

To call attention, however, to the major holy days is to overlook the importance of the minor holy days in regulating much of the life of the older villager who is still apt to be tradition-bound. For example, on July 2, the Day of the Virgin the Sheafbearer, many peasants will not harvest for fear that any sheaves they would gather would be destroyed by fire; or on July 7, the Day of St. Kyriaki, peasant women in many parts of Greece will not bake bread for fear that it will be eaten by snakes; or on July 17, the Day of St. Marina, the people go to the vineyards to collect grapes. On this same day they may make a public sacrifice of a calf, letting the animal's blood run in a special ditch; they follow this sacrifice with a common meal. On July 20, the Day of the Prophet Elijah (Elias), there are also festivals and sacrifices, chiefly because so many churches are named in his honor. Some people go to worship on the mountaintops; others try to foretell the weather since Elijah is associated with rain and thunder; and still others light fires on the mountainsides or in the villages.

Thus one could run through each month. There are dates when livestock owners can begin to let their animals pasture freely in fields and vineyards (September 14), when master and servants are supposed to draw up the contract between them (October 26), when the wine cask is to be opened (November 3 or 11), when agricultural work is to be finished for the year (November 14), when the fountain is to be fed with seeds (November 21), when the icons are to be dipped into the sea (December 6).[8] Each of these dates in and of itself is perhaps not very significant, for the taboos and customs are of a relatively simple sort; but they do illustrate the rich heritage of folklore which surrounds every village, day in and day out, and which adds to the color and vividness of rural life in Greece.

These saints' days also afford the basis for the custom of observing namedays. In Greece, a person and his family pay little attention to his birthday but make much of the day of the saint whose name he bears. In Amphypolis, for instance, on a boy's nameday his parents will sacrifice a lamb. They will sing and dance and afterwards feast on the lamb because, as one village girl expressed it, "each boy belongs to a certain saint and the lamb is for the saint." Throughout Greece one visits a friend on his nameday, enjoys the good food that is served, and wishes the individual long life and happiness. In a village where there are many people named Constantine or George, people go from one party to another until they have had more than enough food and drink.

The greatest holidays of the year are Christmas and Easter, with the latter being the more important. As a matter of fact, Christmas is only one part of the so-called Twelve Days (*Dodekaemeron*) between Christmas

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Eve and Epiphany (December 24–January 6). It is preceded by a week's fast, which formerly lasted forty days, ending on Christmas Eve. Throughout much of Greece it is traditional to kill a pig for Christmas, although in many villages of Thessaly people are satisfied with fowl. Indispensable is the *Christopsoma* (Bread of Christ), a large round loaf, with a cross formed of dough in the middle and with four chestnuts on each side and a fifth in the center. This is a leavened loaf but without any sugar, although in the cities it is so highly decorated with candied fruits that it resembles a sweet loaf. Special Christmas cakes as well as a number of other dishes are also prepared for the occasion.

Christmas Eve is a time for caroling, or the *kalenda*. The carols are about the birth of Christ, the joy that is spread all over the world, "so good master give us something so that we can enjoy with ease Christmas Day." In some parts of Greece adults as well as children go caroling. In addition to triangles which they play while singing, the children may carry little paper ships or houses and lighted lanterns. The carolers in the cities receive coins or sweets, but in the villages they are content with currants and nuts. They avoid homes that are in mourning, although earlier in the day many people have probably visited the cemeteries with offerings of food for the dead.

On Christmas Day itself the more devout go to the early communion service and then on to the home of the eldest relative (if he is very poor, then to the home of the richest relative). Here, in Thessaly at least, they drink *kokorozoumo*, a boullion made from boiled chicken, lamb, and beef, to which a lemon flavoring has been added. In Macedonia, a traditional dish is *dolmades*, or stuffed pickled cabbage leaves prepared on Christmas Eve and allowed to simmer in a sauce pan on a low fire all night. The men in particular drink a great deal of liquor throughout the day and generally end up inebriated, partly because they have been to call on those named Christos or Christina and been duly treated. Christmas Day, though not a time for exchanging gifts, is a special occasion to be celebrated.

Yet throughout this whole twelve-day period many of the peasants reveal an unusual anxiety, for they believe that the Evil Eye is unusually active at this time. Windows and doors must be kept shut so that bad spirits will not bring in illnesses of any kind; furthermore, these spirits — called *kallikantzari* — are usually mischievous as well. They are supposed to be little men with goats' feet, enormous heads, and big ears; they are black, for they come down the chimney which must be kept closed. To be on the safe side, it is well to put a little sugar and a glass of water by the fireplace for them to eat and drink and thus be less inclined to do harm. Every village literally teems with stories about the kallikantzari at this time of year and details differ greatly as to their appearance and pranks. Their presence is

1:Sanders Z-5.4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

the icon of Christ is on his right and that of St. John the Baptist next to it. To his left one sees on the altar the icon of the Virgin, and farther to the left the icon of the saint for whom the church was named.

The congregation stands during the service, except for a few infirm who can lean against supports along the wall; there is no instrumental music, as the priest and the chanter carry the service themselves in a language that much of the time is unintelligible to the worshippers. The gospels are read in Koine, or New Testament Greek, and the liturgy, written by St. John Chrysostom toward the end of the fourth century, is in the Greek of that period. When the priest delivers a sermon, he uses his version of katharevousa, if he is sufficiently schooled; otherwise, he speaks in demotike. Apparently the worshippers are moved by the ceremony, the procession, the swinging censers, and the chanting even more than by the actual meaning of the words to which they listen. Now and then in the liturgy, however, come familiar passages which most can understand because of having learned their meaning in school or from some relative.

The worshippers, among whom small children may be running or tugging, include very few men. They come out for special festival services but show no interest in the regular Sunday-morning service, which is viewed as the woman's social hour. Even during the service women catch up on the latest happenings throughout the village.

The priest, however, is busy at other times, too. Dorothy Lee describes it this way:

> Religion permeates Greek life, punctuating it with ritual. No Greek, urban or rural, would think of initiating anything important without a religious inauguration. Schools open with the inaugurative *agiasmos*, "making holy"; the foundation stone of every house is laid with *agiasmos;* merchants begin new undertakings with the proper religious inauguration. On Epiphany, the sea is made holy for those who journey on it. In the country, blessed water is carried from the Epiphany Mass to sprinkle on the fields. The Virgin and the Saints are invoked, but not mainly as correctives; their main function is to endow an undertaking with good and success, it is not primarily to prevent or correct. . . . Priests are called in, and Saints and the Virgin invoked, also, when difficulties arise. Vows are made for the recovery of a loved one; the priest is called when the family has had a run of misfortune, to "make holy" and exorcise the evil. Priests conduct a rain litany to break a drought.[13]

The parish as such consists of no such array of organized groups as comprise an American congregation; the priest is not trying to convert the unbeliever or change the daily life of his people. He is there to help them meet life's emergencies, to instill a love for their religion and their country, and to act as peacemaker when disputes threaten the harmony of the community.[14]

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Throughout Greece, even in the cities, people never go to their own home or a friend's home from a funeral without first stopping somewhere for a sweet. In many villages it is the custom to wash one's hands before entering the house.

The official period of mourning lasts for two years. Part of the complex of traits connected with mourning is the Feasts of the Dead held at fixed periods, such as the eighth and the fortieth day after burial. Similarly, on the anniversary of the death a feast of remembrance is held. On such occasions the grave is decorated with flowers, a mass is sung, and offerings of *kollyva* are made in the church. Kollyva is "parboiled wheat mixed with pounded walnuts, raisins and parsley, and covered over with a coating of sugar, with the sign of the cross, and sometimes the initials of the deceased worked on it in raisins. The wheat is interpreted as a symbol of the resurrection: as the grain is buried in the earth, rots, and rises again in the shape of a blooming plant, so will the soul rise from the tomb. . . ." [24]

In addition to these ceremonies for deceased individual members of a family, the Greek villagers also have collective feasts for the dead known as Souls' Sabbath (*psychosavvata*), which correspond roughly with spring and harvest, or the life and death cycle of the year. Relatives visit the graves where they leave sweetmeats, parboiled grain, and cakes, and where they kneel and cry beside the tombs as the priests read prayers over them. It is a memorable experience for a foreigner to come unexpectedly upon a graveyard where as many as one hundred and fifty people are wailing over different graves and to see the priests in their colorful robes and with their swinging censers move from one small group to the next.

Priests when they die are treated differently. With an ordinary person the bowl used when the dead are washed for burial is broken and thrown away; but with the priest (in Spetsai at least) it cannot be broken, but is thrown into the sea. The priest's body is not put in a shroud but is dressed by another priest in a *peritrachelion*, or stole which a priest wears when he hears confessions. Also, the first book from which the priest read after becoming a priest is put in the coffin with him. There is another difference, too. At the end of three years after burial, it is customary to dig up the bones of the deceased and wash them in wine and water, but the bones of a priest are washed with oil. When the bones are disinterred, they are put in a basket and taken home to be put under a table on which there is boiled wheat. The priest reads a prayer; the people kiss the skull, put it in the box with the other bones, and this is put in a vault in the cemetery.

Much is made of the condition of the bones. If they are yellowish-brown, this means that the person lived a good life; if they are black, he lived badly. It is also considered a bad omen if the body has not disintegrated.

An excellent summary of the way the peasant fits death into the general scheme of things comes from a study by V. T. Valassis:

1:Sanders Z-5,N (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

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Turks do not receive dowries from their brides but have to pay a deposit in advance for the wife-to-be. When a divorce occurs, the wife's family keeps the money if the man is to blame, but is supposed to give the money to the man or his family if the woman is to blame. [583] [586]

2. See "Women in Greece Demand Equality," *New York Times*, August 22, 1954. Some indication of the changing status of women, particularly in the cities, is found in the periodical *Hellenis: The Voice of Greek Women*, published in English in Athens by four of the leading women's organizations: National Council of Greek Women, Lyceum Club of Greek Women, Hellenic Association of University Women, and Hellenic Girl Guides Association. Also see Panos D. Bardis, "The Changing Family in Modern Greece," *Sociology and Social Research*, XL (1955), 19–23. [575]

3. See K. M. Kalyves, *Laographika Kymes Euboias* (Concerning the Folklore of Kyme, Euboea) (Athens, 1938).

4. Occipital flattening occurs in Epirus. This shape is not particularly sought, according to informants in Ioannina, the provincial capital, but results because the Epirote mother does not take the time to change the child from side to side so that the different parts of the head press against the cradle board. They go about their work and leave the child to cry for hours. Epirote men also seem to prefer the type of haircut that accentuates their particular headshape. It was interesting to find that many educated Greeks in Athens thought the Epirote head an inherited biological trait and not the result of child-care practice. [856] [302] [827]

5. D. Lee, "Greece," in *Cultural Patterns and Technical Change* (Paris, 1953), p. 87 (Mentor edition).

6. UNRRA, *Greece: Ripe for Improvement* (Washington, D.C., 1946), p. 10.

7. Z. D. Ferriman, *Home Life in Hellas: Greece and the Greeks* (London, 1910), pp. 181–82.

8. Kitsos A. Makres, *Pelionitikes Phoreseis* (Volos, 1949). He has made a special study of the art themes on the heads of shepherd crooks: ram's heads, dove feeding a snake, various sitting figures, to mention a few. [532]

9. Angelique Hadjimihali, *L'Art populaire grec* (Athens, 1937). See also her article in the *Megale Hellenike Enkyklopaideia*, X (1934), 827–844.

10. See also D. Loukopoulos, *Pos hyphainoun kai dynontae oi Aitoloi* (How the Aetolians Weave and Dress) (Athens, 1927).

11. Throughout Greece there are various customs related to "feeding the fountain." Women may bring cheese, butter, bread, to leave at the fountain and say, "As the water runs, may animals and crops be abundant and prosperous." [782]

12. Economic Cooperation Administration Mission to Greece, *The I.K.A. Insurance Population*, November 1951 (mimeographed).

13. J. C. Lawson, *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion: A Study in Survivals* (Cambridge, Eng., 1910) p. 21.

14. D. Loukopoulos, "Symmikta laographika en Aitolias" (Collection of Folklore Materials about Aetolia), *Laographia*, XII (1938), 7–11, 47–61. The Spetsai materials came from personal interviews with Chrysoula. [124]

15. Mutual Security Agency Mission to Greece, *Medical and Sanitary Data on Greece*, June 1952.

16. Ernestine Friedl, "Hospital Care in Provincial Greece," *Human Organization*, XVI (Winter 1958), p. 25.

17. *Ibid.*, 26.

Chapter VIII. Courtship and Marriage

1. K. M. Kalyves, *Laographika Kymes Euboias* (Concerning the Folklore of Kyme, Euboea) (Athens, 1938), pp 27–30.

2. Panos D. Bardis, "Main Features of the Greek Family During the Early Twentieth Century," *Alpha Kappa Deltan*, Winter 1956, p. 17. Indicative of this double standard is prostitution, which is found in the town or city, although no houses of [548]

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

The wedding crowns, white wreaths of small artificial flowers, are a necessary part of the Greek Orthodox wedding ritual, and, indeed, give a name to the ceremonial to distinguish it from an engagement. *"Stefanothikan akoma?"* "Have they been crowned yet?" is one way to ask whether a couple are married or still merely engaged. The crowns, which were blessed as part of the wedding, symbolize the founding of a new family under God, and their preservation is an expression of the desire to preserve the health and welfare of the family. That the intercession of the saints is a valuable form of assistance in coping with the problems of life is taken for granted in Vasilika; the icon with the light burning before it and the prayers addressed to the saint constitute a regular plea for the holy one's protection of the family.

The importance of the house as an adjunct of the life of the family is further emphasized by the request each family makes to have a priest bless a new home before the family moves in. An *ayazmos*, as it is called, places the house under God's protection, in the villagers' view, and the ceremonial is significant because building a house is a new and hazardous venture for a family whose success in this world as in the next, it is assumed, is ultimately in God's hands.

Cleanliness and Order

Sanitary facilities in Vasilika play a part in each family's striving for sophistication. A few households have no latrines. The majority have a small wooden outbuilding or a partitioned section of a storehouse for a Turkish-style toilet. This consists of a large excavation in the ground lined with stones and rocks, covered by wooden planks which form the floor of the latrine proper. There is no seat, but the planks are arranged so as to leave a small opening over which one squats to relieve himself. The newer facilities stand as separate structures made of brick, and the floor is cemented so that there is a slight slope toward the center opening. Finally, the best of these arrangements is one in which a specially designed ceramic floor fixture is imbedded in the cement flooring. From the villagers' point of view, the newer latrines are not valued because they constitute better sanitation, but because the villagers' urban relatives have been ridiculing them for not having some kind of toilet.

Just as the public world of the villagers is a world of men, so the house in Vasilika is primarily the domain of women. Women take pride in the skill with which they accomplish their many housekeeping tasks; they gain some satisfaction from completing each day's ordinary chores, as well as from the successful and skilled completion of their trousseau items. The standards of good housewifery in the village require considerable expenditure of time and energy on the maintenance of the home. Villagers value order and cleanliness—order in the sense of stylized neatness, and cleanliness as an avoidance of obvious dirt. We have already mentioned the neat piles of bedding covered with snow-white cloth. When the household has no wardrobe, there is a white covering over the clothes hanging on the wall that protects them from dust, and also creates an

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

and his mitre in its brass box, were borne away to the church on a flood of ragged boys, and we followed rather more sedately while the bells jangled in the tower. The Metropolitan went straight to his throne on the south side of the church after vesting in the open narthex, and I was led to the stall on his right, immediately beneath the great eikon of the Pantocrator in the dome. The church had been recently redecorated and a gay diaper pattern now covered every part of the interior that was not frescoed. Not for the first time I was struck by the contrast between the comeliness and colour of the village church and the squalid dwellings which surrounded it. The little groups of people who had followed us up the stony path from the *mesochori*, or village-square, crowded into the church, setting up their candles before the eikons of our Lord and His Mother, bringing loaves bearing the seal "Jesus Christ conquers" and wine for the offering, oil for the lamps and lists of relatives and friends, both living and departed, to be commemorated at the liturgy that morning. The parish priest came with the singers and the verger to ask the Bishop's blessing, and the morning office (the first part of which had been sung before our arrival) was taken up again.

While the Magnificat was being sung, the parish priest went all about the building censing the holy things and the holy people with a proper indiscrimination, and when the great doxology was reached the sacristan ran down the church and set the three chandeliers swinging in alarming fashion while the belfry again resounded to the clash of metal. Mattins gave place to the divine liturgy; the church became more and more crowded till the people filled the narthex and overflowed down the steps into the path outside. The scouts arrived; the chandeliers swung more slowly, scattering drops of molten wax upon the heads of the congregation and splashing the strip of brightly coloured carpet which extended from the holy table down into the midst of the church; the incense and the venerable prayers rose to heaven, and the children scrambled up the stair leading to the high pulpit or balanced on the backs of the stalls occupied by their grandfathers.

The Epistle (from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians), was read by the chief singer, or *psaltes*, a soldier from the garrison at Nevrokopi who had learned the traditional chant in some village church on Pangaion, overlooking the ruined basilica where "the saints in Christ Jesus which were in Philippi" celebrated in their day that same holy offering in which we at Dasoto were taking part. There, like the ragged boys who now pressed upon him from all sides, he had joined with slowly growing

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
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as to lead me to suspect the offering of a discreet compliment to western Christendom; the fruits of the word, love, joy and peace, made manifest in the life and death of the blessed Polycarp. 796

"And you boys", said the Bishop, with 'a diligent and busy cast of his eye' toward certain of the more youthful of his auditors; "you who steal eggs and fruit and take other people's food out of the communal oven: there is no reason why you—if you keep the word of God faithfully—should not be as great as St. Peter or St. Paul, or why at the end of your lives you should not be able to echo those ever-memorable words of Polycarp: 'These eighty and six years have I been His servant' . . ."

Looking round that crowded church, my mind went to the Whitsuntide hymn: "Blessed art thou, O Christ our God, who hast made the fishermen wise by the sending down upon them of the Holy Spirit, and through them hast drawn the world into thy net."

The sermon ended, the singers took up the solemn chant of the Hymn of the Cherubim, and a hush fell upon the congregation as the ministers with their attendants emerged from the prothesis chapel and made their slow circuit of the church, the veiled oblations borne aloft, to the accompaniment of that all-embracing appeal: [533]

> May the Lord God be mindful of us all
> in His kingdom, always, now and for ever,
> and unto the ages of ages.

The holy gifts were carried up within the sanctuary and laid upon the altar. The singers resumed their interrupted hymn; the atmosphere was heavy with incense—which, say the commentators, is here an emblem of the mixture of myrrh and aloes which Nicodemus brought for the entombment of the Lord: [782]

> Lo, Christ is crucified, the Life is buried,
> the tomb is made fast, the stone is sealed.

Two shallow alms-baskets piled high with tattered notes were passed slowly round the church, while the sacristan sprinkled perfume from a pewter vessel into the outstretched hands of the more accessible among the male members of the congregation. [794]

The long drawn-out alleluias died away into silence as the parish [788]

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
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of Life have been most active, there have, as we shall see in a later chapter, been certain changes in liturgical practice during recent years: very often now the celebrant reads in an audible voice the whole of the *anaphora*, or great eucharistic prayer, which the rubric directs him to say *mystikos*—mystically, or secretly—and the whole congregation kneels at the invocation of the Holy Spirit. None of these influences had as yet reached this remote corner of New Greece, however, and the liturgy was still celebrated at Dasoto after the fashion which caused Robert de Dreux, in the seventeenth century, to observe that "it is not easy to see all that they do when they say mass, because the celebrant is hidden by a screen which shuts off the altar, and only shows himself three or four times". This, however, is a topic to which we shall have occasion to return.

The Lord's Prayer (like the Creed) was recited by a girl, and there were some thirty communicants including several children borne in the arms of their mothers—a familiar sight this in every Greek parish church. When the liturgy was ended, and the Bishop had distributed the blessed bread to the whole congregation, I observed some twenty of those who had communicated kneel before the royal doors while their father in God read a brief prayer of absolution. I have referred elsewhere to contemporary Greek practice in regard to the use of the mystery of confession. In the country districts at least, where confessors are rare, this is by no means as uniform as some are apt to suppose, or as might be inferred from the customs which obtain among the Russians of the diaspora, in Paris and elsewhere, with whom the sacrament has tended in recent times to become an obligatory part of the preparation for holy communion.

When one has fasted as a Christian one feasts as a Christian—in Greece at least.

Then for their Festivals [says Dr. Covel] . . . there is not one that appears there but will contribute something, as his share, towards the providing of victuals and drink in abundance, (as at our old Whitsun-Ales, or setting up May-poles and the like in England) there is hardly one Greek so poor, but he will borrow, or pawn, or sell his very Cloaths, or something else, to get Money for Wine, to Celebrate the Festival; and it is the same Practice amongst them upon the Holydays set apart for the Virgin Mary, or any other

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

788 796 west—been reduced to a mere shadow of its former self. Is not the Greek Christian for all practical purposes a mere passive onlooker at a gorgeous spectacle performed by the resplendent ministers: even though the sacred participants in the divine drama sometimes descend from their apron stage and mingle with the audience?

It must be admitted that the average Greek layman communicates very rarely, often only once or twice a year; outside the immediate sphere of influence of the movements, hardly ever more than four times. This reluctance of the laity to communicate frequently is a phenomenon which has been common to east and west from a very early period—though in the west (among Orthodox of the diaspora as well as amongst western Christians) there has been a widespread return to something more nearly approaching primitive practice. Its causes are complex and, to a great extent, a matter for speculation. One factor which is peculiar to the east is the place which the *antidoron* has come to occupy. It would be an over-simplification to say that the blessed bread which the Greek Christian is accustomed to receive at the end of every liturgy is consciously looked upon as a substitute for the holy communion; nevertheless, the *antidoron* has a deep significance for the Greek layman —more, perhaps, than in other parts of the Orthodox world.

The reluctance to communicate frequently does not, as we can see from the history of certain movements within western Christendom, necessarily spring from carelessness and sloth; often it is due to a sense of unworthiness which is none the less real though it be considered misguided. Even in reforming circles in Greece to-day one discovers great wariness on the part of the clergy in recommending frequent, let alone daily, communion to their people. This is not, it is held, a matter [783] to be undertaken lightly, or without the advice and approval of an experienced confessor; and few priests will permit their penitents to communicate as often as once a month unless they are satisfied that the desire goes hand in hand with a real determination to follow Christ in their daily life. To communicate every Sunday is regarded as an inestimable privilege, but one which is hardly for all men.

[782] [769] [369] Then we must not ignore the part played by the ordinary Christian in the offertory. In the country districts of Greece the housewife who bakes her bread on Saturday will set aside one loaf upon which she has stamped with a wooden seal a traditional design wherein the words "Jesus Christ conquers"—abbreviated to I(HCOY)C . X(PICTO)C . NI . KA—constitute the most prominent feature. Early on Sunday

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

morning she will set out for the parish church with her loaf, and arriving whilst the singers are still chanting the morning psalms, and taking it to the door of the chapel where the elements are prepared, she will hand it to the priest together with a vessel of wine, the family diptychs —or lists of relatives and friends, both living and departed, to be commemorated by name at the holy eucharist—and perhaps a flask of oil for the lamps and a few grains of incense. Even in an urban parish church the faithful may purchase a sealed loaf at the counter in the narthex where candles are sold, and send it to the celebrant with their diptychs.

It is frequently asserted that the offering of the people disappeared from the eastern liturgies at an early date. One can only marvel at the number of eminent scholars who have been led astray in this matter through failure to distinguish clearly between the offertory procession of the Roman rite and the offering itself. The procession never found a place in the Byzantine rite, which retained the older practice of presenting the bread and wine informally before the commencement of the eucharistic liturgy. So widely-used a liturgical handbook as the late Dr. Srawley's *Early History of the Liturgy* asserts that "the offerings of the people, which consisted partly of bread and wine, out of which the elements of the eucharist were taken, and partly of alms . . . continued in the west longer than in the east".[1] In actual fact the offering of the people has never disappeared from the Byzantine liturgy and may still be witnessed in any Greek village church on the Lord's day.

But even though it be admitted that the offering of the bread and wine makes the ordinary people something more than mere passive spectators at a gorgeous pageant, it may yet be said that from very early times the rightful liturgy of the laity has in practice been transferred to the choir: the common people hardly open their mouths from one end of the eucharistic liturgy to the other. Now it is true that congregational singing as practised in the west is so rare among the Greeks as to be almost unknown. Only on one of the great festivals of the Church's year will the whole congregation take up the melody of some ancient hymn: the paschal anthem *Christ is risen from the dead*, for example, or the dismissal hymn at the Epiphany. Normally those parts of the liturgy which properly belong to the laity are in fact sung by the *psaltai* or trained singers —and this applies even to the responses to the petitions of the litanies.

[1] 2nd edition, Cambridge, 1949, p. 127. Dom Gregory Dix and Professor Burkitt have already been taken to task on this issue by the Archimandrite Alexis van der Mensbrugghe.

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

788 What, on the other hand, is very common is for the laity to repeat,
796 almost inaudibly, the words of the prayers and hymns of the liturgy
533 as they are chanted by the singers. Not only is this practice very widespread among Greek Christians, it is also officially encouraged, while from very early times only the canonically appointed *psaltai* have been allowed to sing aloud in church. Thus, in a modern Greek catechism, the question: "Does not the whole of the *laos* take part in public worship?" receives the following answer:

"Yes, it does and should take part; not only by standing reverently and following in spirit what is being done, but also by joining in and softly singing . . . thus to show that it is a lively member of the body of the Church."

In other words, the excellent practice commonly known to the western world as 'praying the mass' is one with which the ordinary [782] Greek Christian is thoroughly familiar. He has never been accustomed to occupy the long hours that he spends in church with 'private' devotions—indeed the expression would be unintelligible to him. It is not only "pious Russians of the middle classes" who (in the words of John Mason Neale) "feel a repugnance to use any devotions but those of the Church".

It is necessary, moreover, to bear in mind that the separation between the Greek *psaltai* and the whole body of the faithful is much less marked than in western Christendom, with its surpliced choirs. The singers are quite plainly members of the congregation: the spokesmen of the whole body of the *laos* amongst whom they stand. They normally wear [292] lay dress; only in an urban parish church will one normally see an [369] *anagnostes*, or reader, wearing a simple black gown. The ordinary singers are indistinguishable from the rest of the people. Indeed, one of the 788 things which commonly strikes the visitor to Greece who finds his way 796 for the first time to a parish church is the unexpectedly prominent (some would say obtrusive) part played by the laity in the church services. Very often long stretches of incomprehensible offices seem to be conducted entirely by laymen; the parish priest only occasionally emerging from the sanctuary, and disappearing as quickly after a brief *ekphonesis*, to leave matters wholly in the hands of two middle-aged gentlemen in double-breasted suits, supported by a nondescript collection of young men and boys.

This, to the western mind, curiously prominent liturgical rôle of the lay-singers has occasioned comment in other ages than our own. On the [175] feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury in the year of our Lord 1400, King Henry IV rode out to Blackheath at the head of an imposing array, to

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

more than 200 words in all. Amongst the second and third generations of Orthodox *emigrés* in America to-day English is being widely used as a liturgical language.

This being so, it is reasonable to presume that where an ancient liturgical language is retained (as in Greece, for example) it is still tolerably intelligible to the ordinary people. It may indeed be questioned whether, except for brief epochs of the Church's history, her common prayer has ever been cast in a language wholly familiar to the unlearned. This is not the place to embark upon a description of the present condition of the Greek language: the subject is peculiarly complex and, in certain of its aspects, highly controversial. Suffice it to say that the *katharevousa*, or 'purified' language, which is still, despite many violent assaults, the normal medium of literary expression, differs comparatively little from the formal Greek of the Byzantine writers. The leading articles of a newspaper such as *Kathimerini* (the Greek equivalent of *The Times*) can be read with fair comprehension by an average classical scholar. The *demotiki*, or popular language, on the other hand, has undergone a far greater transformation since the days when the liturgies were composed, so that a comparison of the two forms of Greek will reveal very wide differences both in grammar and vocabulary.

Both *katharevousa* and *demotiki* are current to-day, and an educated Greek will be familiar with either. A Greek bishop, for example, will normally use, within the privacy of his own metropolis and in everyday conversation with his people, a Greek which he would never dream of employing when writing to a fellow *despotes* or to the Holy Synod. Amongst the ordinary people, however, at any rate since the popular language ousted the *katharevousa* from the primary schools, the latter is never used; the average shepherd or grocer would be hard put to it to compose a letter in the sort of Greek that may be heard in the lecture rooms of the national university.

This does not mean, however, that the Greek of the liturgies is more or less incomprehensible to the common people. Far from it. It is often quite startling to find how much of the Psalter, the New Testament and the Church's prayers the Greek peasant has made his own. The fact is that in the ordinary Greek village the children spend so much time in church from earliest infancy onwards that they inevitably become familiar with the language that is used there. By the time they grow up they will commonly know much of the liturgy and the scriptures almost by heart. If anyone should doubt this let him

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

consider the family prayers and personal devotions of the Greek laity. These are made up wholly of prayers, psalms and hymns drawn from the liturgy: scarcely ever (save in certain circles influenced by the new movements) do they include vernacular prayers. The *Hiera Synopsis*—the laity's manual of prayers—consists entirely of extracts from the Church's liturgy. The form of evening prayer commonly used in a Greek household is simply a shortened version of the Little Compline which closes the day in every monastery.

The 'liturgical' approach to the Bible has, it must be confessed, certain limitations. If the laity were present at *all* the services of the Church they would indeed acquire a working knowledge of the greater part of the holy scriptures. In practice, however, they will normally hear only those portions of the Old and New Testaments which are read on Sundays and holy days at the eucharistic liturgy and (depending on the regularity of their attendance) at mattins and evensong. Since 'Bible-reading' is little practised outside the new movements (where, indeed, it is universal) this inevitably means that the majority of the Greek laity, being wholly dependent upon the lections which occur in the course of the regular liturgical cycle, are unfamiliar with considerable portions of the Bible, particularly of the Old Testament.

It is, moreover, almost certainly true that the common people understand very imperfectly some of the elaborate 'canons' which recur only once every year (and then generally at mattins when few of the laity are present in church). But, as W. J. Birkbeck remarks not inappositely of the Russian muzhiks of his day: "I myself have heard a great many more quotations (and intelligent quotations too) made from the canons . . . of St. Cosmas and St. John Damascene than I have ever heard from the Norfolk peasantry, amongst whom I have lived all my life, from the Hebrew prophets, which are read, or ought to be read, in all our churches throughout the months of September and October!"

While many a Greek Christian's familiarity with the Bible will extend only to those passages which are read during the course of the liturgy, his *theological* understanding of the scriptures is commonly far deeper than that of the, often better-informed, English churchman. Unlike so many an earnest student of the Bible, he realises—however obscurely—that the divine history is related at every point to what goes on week by week in his parish church: that it is only to those who are baptised into Christ's saving death, who are living in the mystery revealed in the Church, that the full meaning of the scriptures is laid bare.

.5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

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degrees, from the Primates and Metropolites down to the lowest Order of Deacons . . . and if we English Churchmen are lookt upon by the Easterlings in this Point, but as Mongrels or half primitive Clergy-men at the best, how odious and abominable must the Calvinists appear to them, when they shall be told . . . that there is no such outward Pomp, or any reverend or decent Garments used in their divine Offices amongst them; their Ministers are not Episcopally ordain'd, and they wear only a common black Cloak and a Coat or Jump.

The Greek Church has never known a vestiarian controversy. The *phelonion*, richly wrought with gold and silver though it be, has never, like the western vestment and the comely surplice, served to kindle polemical ardour. It is evident to all men that the earthly ministers of Christ should be clothed in such apparel as becomes their high calling: to celebrate the divine mysteries in a common black cloak or Calvinistic "jump" would be indecent, a breach of good manners—like going to a formal banquet in one's workaday clothes.

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It is not a little startling to turn from the controversies about vestments and lights and incense which continue to agitate many western Christians, to a church where these things are used quite simply and naturally and without occasioning the slightest comment. The Greek attitude towards the liturgical use of incense does indeed afford a peculiarly striking instance of the dangers awaiting the Frankish controversialist who seeks to bolster up his tottering defences with unwary borrowings from beyond the Adriatic shores. Amongst the Greeks incense is used at every service, from the most elaborate of pontifical liturgies to a simple ceremony such as the blessing of a house. To do otherwise would be thought irreverent: if any custom can claim to be evangelical it is surely this. Did not the Lord God Himself command Moses his servant:

> Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight. And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy. And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy.

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

GRAVE AND DIFFERENT GARMENTS

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To worship without incense is commonly regarded as one of the innovations of the Catholics. There is a story of an English churchman who was catechised by some Orthodox monks (I fancy that they were Serbs) as to the practice of the *Ecclesia Anglicana*.

"Do you, in your divine worship", they demanded, "invariably offer incense?"

The Englishman confessed that this evangelical custom was not observed at every service within the territories of the Metropolitan of Canterbury.

"Ah!" said the monks, shaking their heads at this irrefutable testimony to the spread of popery: "We knew that you were tainted with Catholicism!"

Let not the western Protestant be dismayed if his refusal to burn incense in his churches is interpreted by the Orthodox not as a sign of his adherence to evangelical tradition but, on the contrary, as a badge of popery. I have always suspected that my Greek friends must find it extraordinarily difficult to enter into the history of the 'ritualistic' controversies of the latter part of the nineteenth century, since the issues at stake are so remote from their own experience. What *can* one make of muddle-headed *barbaroi* who are so perverse as to regard the observance of evangelical customs as evidence of the continuing influence of the Arch-Protestant?

/31 cont./ where thoughts are crystallized into action. Here the political leaders meet their followers.

Every stranger, merchant, peddler, politician, government employee, or any other agent, goes first to the coffee house where he can get reliable information and pass on his mission.

The Orthodox religion has been enforced upon the people directly from the church. The religion is taught at the school, and church ceremonies are conducted in the church. The whole family goes to the church every Sunday morning and thus the child follows the elders in their religious beliefs. The church through its numerous holidays teaches something new to the people, brings up the people to it through various ceremonies. The child /32/ learns from father and mother that this or that holiday has this or that moral meaning to their lives. The school as a part of its religious education obliges every student with the teacher to attend church on Sundays and holidays. The teacher or the priest on such holiday occasions explains to the people the religious significance of the day and its practical application to their lives. Their Christian religion is unlike the Christian religion of many other sects. The Orthodox church believes in one God and in Christ as his son, but according to the nature of their demands they pray to special designated saints whom they think are able to help them. For example, for rain they pray to St. Ilias, who rides in a carriage and makes the thunder. For war they pray to St. Demeter. For travel on sea they pray to St. Nicola. For having a child to St. Nufrios. For sickness to St. Spyridion, etc. down the line. It is not so simple as the Protestant religion, nor so simple as Protestantism in that it depends much more on ceremonials. They take their religion seriously and believe in it completely.

When a cow or a member of a family gets sick, or the crop is not as promising, either the priest or another person next to the priest will be called to offer prayer. /33/ The priest is the representative of the Saints through whom they communicate with God. Religion makes a large part of their activity and thus the youngsters as they grow, fit themselves in it and take their respective places.

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Medical care. The only village in the area that has the best medical service is Megali Vrisi. The efforts of the nurse and the doctor slowly are gaining ground and more and more the people follow their principles of caring for the sick. The newly-erected hospital in the nearby city of Kilkis provides care for the inhabitants of the area free of charge. If the patient is very sick he usually is taken there, where he can find specialized doctors. 758 759 [178] [743]

The construction of the living houses is so poorly done in the village that the care of the sick under such conditions is hard. The windows are small and the mud floor with severe cold winds of the winter and no proper fuel to warm the house makes it harder yet to care for the sick. 758 362

The mutual assistance of relatives in sickness as well as of neighbors is great. People at times of /66/ great difficulties help each other, not only through labor but by giving each other food and even money. Especially is this characteristic of this people to share alike each other's burdens and partake actively in their grief and sorrow. 758 476 621

The Faith Healer. People of experience and cleverness perform certain magical performances that convince the people of their ability to command the spirits. Most of the inhabitants of Megali Vrisi believe them and spend money and time to visit them. People suffering from chronic diseases, or if born with defects of the body, or if unable to bear any child, find as the answer to their discouraged condition the faith healers. 755 [842]

Some Saints who perform miracles for donating to them; a lamb, a hen, a goat, or a cow, may, in return, act favorably for the patient. Priests praying for the sick or for the crippled are not uncommon. On special holidays, certain churches fill up with such sick and crippled people. Some sleep in the church for weeks without food and pray continuously to the Saint. Stories circulate that some one saw the Saint riding on the horse, are very common. Sometimes these saints actually do heal indirectly local pains, even of the partly crippled. Even doctors 755 782 776 [793] [787]

/66 cont./

are so affected by the circulating stories that they send their sick patients to /67/ the Saints as their last resort.

Crosses and certain signs are carried by strong believers. The evil eye is strongly believed in and special written prayers wrapped up in waterproof cloth hang around their necks.

Cleanliness is an asset of the Caucasians and they take weekly baths and change their clothes. The Thracians, who live more the primitive type of life, never bathe their bodies but only their heads. They still believe that the holy oil which the priest put on them at their baptism is on their body and bathing may wash it away. The influence of this belief is less among the younger generation and in the near future it may disappear. One would naturally expect more disease and sickness among the filthy Thracians, but just the opposite is proved by the figures of a survey. These people do not cooperate so strongly with the doctor and the nurse and still they have the healthiest children, the least disease and the lowest death rate. The diet of the Thracians is poorer than that of the Caucasians. They seldom cook and eat mostly raw vegetables, poorly-baked whole wheat bread, but more /68/ dairy products, such as cheese, milk, and sour milk (gioghourt).

Their clothing is made out of wool. Men, women, and children, even in the hot summers, wear woolen clothes.

Washing the teeth is unknown among these people, except among those who have had a chance to go to high school or worked in cities. There was one dentist in the nearby city and the area and the city included had a population of 130,000. He could not make his living in this population and was planning to move to a larger city and visit the area once a week.

People often think it is a crazy idea to put tooth paste in the mouth and shine the teeth. Their diet of vegetables, and black whole wheat bread keeps the teeth shining and healthy. This does not mean that there are no people with bad teeth, but they are very scarce and the local experienced dentists do the job without reward.

782 [755] [776] [778] [751] [754] 515 184 [851] [178] [164] [165] 262 291 515 [369] 759 164 [515] [752] [759]

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makes his prayer every evening and morning, occupies the eastern corner of the house. The ikon of the Saint is well decorated with the best handwork. In front of the ikon hangs an oil lantern that burns day and night. The Saint guards the family, the animals, and blesses the crops. Usually members of the family bear the name of the Saint. [354] [553]

Once a month the priest visits the home of every farmer and brings the blessing of the coming month by sprinkling holy water in all the corners of the house. He passes in front of the ikon and utters a prayer in the name of the Saint for the safeguard, prosperity, and health of the family. [793] [788] [782]

Religion for these people is a necessity of life. Without it they cannot live. In every phase of /78/ their lives religion plays an important part as in recreation, farming, traveling or even in fighting they have their respective Saint through whom they communicate with God. 771 776 182

When Paul entered the temple of the unknown God and preached the known God to the Greeks, he must have forgotten to mention to them the form of worship they should adopt. The Greeks have accepted the theory of Christianity of one God but have dressed up this new religion with their old forms of worship. They have changed the names of ancient gods and given them new names with the same duty as the old ones. Thus Saint Nicholas replaced the god of the sea, Poseidon. 788 776

Since 1453, which marks the fall of Constantinople to the Turks and the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the Christian people of the Near East have gone through the severest test in Christian history. The continuous persecution, massacres, deportations, and all kinds of inhuman methods could not desecrate it. In fact the Christian faith got stronger and stronger and had become a bond of uniting the Christians. The same strong ties in this religion strengthened them to overthrow the bonds of slavery, after 400 years. It /79/ was religion that kept the Greek letters, the language of the people, and it was their strong belief in the power 175 795 [619]

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of the Saints and Christ that made them often take extremely dangerous steps against their conquerors. The leaders of the churches became victims of the cruelty, but at last these very same persecuted priests started the revolt and gave freedom to the Greek people. Thus religion is a part of our nationalism, it is a part of our freedom and a part of our struggle for existence. I do not think any Christian people have undergone the test for Christianity that the Greek people did. If one goes back deep into the causes of the present Greek stubbornness in resisting the impossible and standing by their promise up to the end to help England, we will find it again in their religion.

As long as people live in the religion they have developed throughout centuries they cannot be conquered.

Faith in time of trouble. For every trouble there is a remedy and there is some source that will come to aid. Long dry seasons often lead the people to /80/ all day and night prayers to Saint Ilias for rain. When members of the family get sick, the priest offers prayer. The people strongly believe in the mercifulness and forgiveness of God. All occurrences, good or bad, come from God and He rewards and punishes people according to their deeds. Possibly for people who are not contaminated with the explanation that science gives to many phenomena, it is better for them to have blind faith and hope for the solution of their troubles.

The church. The church occupies the central part of the village and has a large yard around it. Its steeple is wooden and temporarily keeps the bells that call the people to the morning and evening church services. The bells also serve for a fire alarm as well as school time for the children. When the people left their countries they left behind livestock, furniture, and many valuable things, but they succeeded in bringing with them the ikons and the church bells. Some of the ikons date back to the 16th century. The lower parts of the ikons are worn out from the kisses received in the church. The people have great pride in their church and in the power of their ikons to perform miracles. Regardless of

/96 cont./

Local Holidays. The Greek Orthodox Church has more saint days than the calendar of the year could take care of. The church calendar used to provide more than half of the days of the year as observable holidays which naturally provided more leisure time for the people. More leisure time meant more churches, more spending and more monasteries. With the advance of the materialistic civilization these holidays have been greatly reduced, but still there are 94 church holidays for the farmer to observe besides Sundays and the national holidays. These holidays provide ample leisure time /97/ for the farmers to drink and dance. The village musicians get out on the village square and call out those that celebrate their name days. One by one the big circle is formed in the village square. If the Greek Orthodox Church has nothing to serve to the people by building up their religious beliefs, it has enough holidays to relieve the people from life's struggle. Megali Vrisi celebrates St. Nicholas day as its village holiday. This is the day when every corner of every house is scrubbed and cleaned. The village yards are well cleaned. The church committee prepares a special program featuring certain events. Prizes are given to the best wrestlers and to the best dancers. These events draw a large crowd from the neighboring villages. On this special day the livestock of the church is sold in auction. People donate to the church either poultry, calves, sheep, lambs, or goats for the dreams they dreamed about the saint of the church or the help they received from the church when they prayed. These can be considered as sacrifices which people make to the church. The church committee sells the livestock on this occasion. This custom is very similar to that of the primitive peoples of worshiping their gods by sacrifices.

/98/ The holiday has the following effects on the peoples:

1. Gives them a chance to clean up their houses.
2. Makes them hospitable for they have to take care of the visitors.
3. The day they forgive each other and forget the old grievances.

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really Greek, since they do not conform to the tradition of Greekness.

Religion permeates Greek life, punctuating it with ritual. No Greek, urban or rural, would think of initiating anything important without a religious inauguration. Schools open with the inaugurative *agiasmos*, "making holy"; the foundation stone of every house is laid with *agiasmos*; merchants begin new undertakings with the proper religious inauguration. On Epiphany, the sea is made holy for those who journey on it. In the country, blessed water is carried from the Epiphany Mass to sprinkle on the fields. The Virgin and the Saints are invoked, but not mainly as correctives; their main function is to endow an undertaking with good and success, it is not primarily to prevent or correct. When a loved man, husband, son, brother, father, beloved, goes away with the merchant marine, or in the sponge-fishery, a woman makes a vow to the appropriate saint, to be fulfilled on the safe return. The islands are studded with small chapels which were promised on such occasions. However, priests are called in, and Saints and the Virgin invoked, also, when difficulties arise. Vows are made for the recovery of a loved one; the priest is called when the family has had a run of misfortune, to "make holy" and exorcise the evil. Priests conduct a rain litany to break a drought.

Traditionally, Sunday services are attended regularly by women and children, perhaps less faithfully by the men. Ceremonials, however, draw the entire family. The ritual is not bolstered by strict limits of time or rules of silence. Mass starts in due course, a little early or a little late, not on the dot of an appointed time. Children run in and out between the aisles, and mothers whisper endearments to babies. A woman will break into a dirge during the Good Friday Mass of the Epitaph, mourning the death of Christ, or adressing herself in sympathy to the bereaved Virgin. The Mass before the midnight preceding Easter is tense with expectation; there is great release and spontaneous joy when Christ is announced to be risen, and the "Christ is risen!" with which all are greeted is a true, joyous message, full of the wonder and the reassurance of the renewed miracle; the candles lighted from the sacred light at this time are carried home with true concern for saving the flame from extinction.

Religion is so firmly entrenched and unquestioned that it can be taken with casualness and a lack of self-conscious effort. It is accepted and ever-present like the air. One talks about Masses and preparations for litanies, but not about religion. Religion is not a personal matter, nor is it a guide to conduct. People consult the priest, but in matters of human relations, or, at any rate, relations which are regarded as secular, not because they are assailed by doubts. Young men do not talk about the meaning of Christ in their lives, nor do young girls dream of entering a convent. On the other hand, the Saints and the Virgin often figure in speech: a man singing of his beloved likens her neck to an altar, her arms to church tapers, or he tells her that he worships her like the Virgin.

he worships her like the Virgin. A derisive Dodecanese anti-Mussolini song, composed during Italian occupation, makes casual reference to God and the beloved Virgin of the Island.

HEALTH

The stock phrase for beginning a Greek letter is "We have health and health we wish for you." A frequent form of greeting and good-bye is "Health to you", and this is also said to anyone who sneezes. Anyone wearing a new article of clothing is greeted with the wish that he wear it with health. The question "How are you? Are you well?" asked upon a meeting with someone, are real questions, requiring an answer. Health is good and important, it is desired, but it is not a preoccupation. The wish for health is not a sanction; one of the child care manuals uses this sanction in urging mothers not to let their young children play with the neighbourhood children for fear of contracting infections, but the other urges the mothers not to worry about microbes, since association with others is of primary importance. In general, however, health is not a motivation in nutrition, recreation, or housing. And human relations are definitely more important. It is terrible to send a member of the family to the hospital unless, of course, it is necessary for an operation. Because of this attitude, tuberculosis often spreads through the family, since very often not even the barrier of self-protection will be introduced between the ailing and the well. Added to this is the fear that, if tuberculosis is known to be in the family, it will be hard to get a son-in-law. However, if an operation is required, a woman will go alone from a village to a hospital in Athens. There is no rejection by her family involved here; in addition, the pattern of fortitude is evoked.

In general, people do not go to a doctor unless something is very wrong. They do not go for a general check-up, although the habit of going to maternal and well-baby clinics is gaining ground. If anyone is unwell, home remedies are first resorted to, and probably the wise woman who knows about herbs is called in. The manuals on child care have long sections, covering about a third of the book, on home care and the diagnosis of disease; and they urge the use of traditional remedies: cupping, the use of camomile and other herbs. When a serious illness is recognized, the doctor is called and vows are made to the Virgin or the appropriate Saint; a mother may vow a foot pilgrimage, or 40 daily obeisances over a period of time, or the gilding of the hands of an ikon. Much illness arises from the evil eye or magic spells, and can be counteracted by magical practices.

The tuberculosis division of the UNRRA mission to Greece reports the impression that there was only one half the amount of tubercu-